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ABSTRACT

Little has been written on the impact of Far East civilization's thought and influence on leisure in China today. A discussion of Chinese history, outlined in three stages, clarifies the development of Chinese philosophy over the past 5,000 years. Chinese civilization and culture rest upon a philosophical basis shaped primarily by the principles of Confucianism, Taoism, and Neo-Confucianism. Confucianism stresses ideal human relationships. Taoism emphasizes the need to look beyond the promises and treaties of human beings for a source of peace and contentment. Neo-Confucianism joined certain metaphysical ideas of Buddhism and Taoism to Confucianism, resulting in an acceptance of the human cycle from birth to death as normal and good and a concentration on society and political reform in this life. A variety of recreation activities are embedded in Chinese culture and the people's daily living. Contemporary Chinese leisure can be discussed in three broad categories: tourism, sports, and general leisure activities. The most significant impact of Chinese thought on people's leisure life is based on three specific features of traditional Chinese society: agriculture as the base of living; family as the core of life; and Confucianism as the root of thought. Several historical and contemporary aspects of Chinese people's lives have influenced their leisure patterns, including limited free time because of having to engage in hard work; urbanization; a passive attitude toward leisure; the role of women in society; and reverence for nature. Chinese attitudes and values also account for differences between Chinese and Western leisure patterns. (IAH)

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THE IMPACT OF ANCIENT CHINESE PHILOSOPHY ON CONTEMPORARY LEISURE IN CHINA

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Abstract

Much has been written concerning Greek philosophy and its impact on leisure in the United States. But little has been written on the impact of Far East civilization thought and its influence on leisure in China. This paper serves to aid in filling the void in understanding the impact that thought has on leisure in China today. The development of Chinese philosophy is presented as is leisure in China today. Lastly, the influence of Chinese philosophy on leisure of Chinese people is discussed.

THE IMPACT OF ANCIENT CHINESE PHILOSOPHY ON CONTEMPORARY LEISURE IN CHINA

Much has been written concerning ancient Greek ideas and their impact on leisure in the United States. The Greek ideas of leisure actually served to promote leisure's essence as the wellspring of Western culture (Dare, Welton, & Coe, 1987). The information on this topic is so abundant that a person is often overwhelmed with the amount of information available.

This is not the case with Far East civilization and the impact of that thought on leisure in those countries. Chinese scholars have paid little attention to the study of leisure. In fact, the term leisure can not even be found in the *Encyclopedia of China Today* (1980) or the *People's Republic of China Year Book (1988/89)*. Why doesn't leisure appear in Chinese literature? In what aspect does leisure exist in China? It would be inappropriate to conclude that Chinese people do not have leisure just because of the lack of information. Since leisure is so much a part, or even the basis, of a culture, the shadow of leisure in all aspects of Chinese culture --- religion, society, family, and daily living --- will be explored.

China has had more than 2,000 years of feudalism and is strongly connected to three main religions: Buddhism, Taoism, and Christianity. Buddhism is particularly penetrated in Chinese ethics, literature, architecture, sculpture, painting, and philosophy. Buddhism merged with Confucianism, the most

influential philosophy in China, and became the social morality and an integral part of the culture of the Chinese people.

In order to clarify the development of Chinese philosophy over the past 5,000 years, Chinese history will be discussed in three stages: 1) the formative age, prehistory - 206 B.C.; 2) the early empire, 206 B.C. - A.D. 960; and 3) the later empire, 960 - 1850 (Hucker, 1975). Within each stage, the most important philosophy or cultural development will be reviewed. Following that review, contemporary Chinese leisure lifestyles will be presented.

History of Chinese Philosophy

The Formative Age, Prehistory - 206 B.C. Chinese civilization and culture rest upon a philosophical basis shaped primarily by the principles of Confucianism, Taoism, and Neo-Confucianism. These three philosophies have guided and shaped the lives and institutions of Chinese people for more than 2,500 years. As Koller (1985) stated, "Stressing the importance of preserving, cultivating, and making great human life, Chinese philosophy has been closely connected with politics and morality and had assumed most of the functions of religion" (p. 245).

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) was the chief molder of China and was recognized as the greatest thinker and educator of ancient China. The principle of Confucianism has become the core belief of Chinese people, the direction of culture, and the society norms of people's behavior and thought. In contrast to most

religions in the world which stress belief in God, Heaven, and after-life as the essential tasks of religion, Confucianism stresses ideal human relationship as the essence of its philosophy called "lwun-li" (ethics) (Kim, 1973).

In Confucius' thought, Heaven and later-life are not denied, but are not emphasized either. They are not clearly and dogmatically defined but vaguely recognized as real. Even though many Chinese people do practice Confucianism as a religion, some critics assert that Confucianism is not a religion but a humanistic and ethical philosophy. It is a philosophy that purports social organization and peaceful, harmonious relations through *jen*, often translated as benevolence or altruistic love meaning human-heartedness, love, or sympathy. *Jen* is one of the most important ideas in Confucian thought and is often equated with virtue or morality; it is the manifestation of the genuine nature. Thus, *jen* is the common denominator of humanity on the one hand and the mark which distinguishes humans from animals on the other. It is both the innermost nature and the highest ideal of true humanhood, the beginning and the end of the way of life (Moore, 1977).

Two additional aspects of Confucianism are *yi* (righteousness or justice) and *li* (propriety and ceremonies). These aspects pave the way and lead to the proper relations of humans in their several stations in life --- master and servant, father and son, husband and wife, brothers, and friends. Seeing the problems stemming from sovereign power exerted without moral principle and

solely for the benefit of sovereign luxury, Confucius urged social reforms that would allow government to be administrated for the benefit of all people. He urged that it could be done if the members of the government were of the highest personal integrity, understood the need of the people, and cared as much for the welfare and happiness of the people as they did for themselves.

Mencius (541-479 B.C.), a successor of Confucius' thought, systematized Confucian philosophy and built his own unique theory on Confucius' teaching. Mencius emphasized the ability to do good. Evil, according to Mencius, is a *posteriori* product due to the external influence (Kim,1973). Mencius also advocated a primitive idea of democracy and revolution and emphasized the importance of the people and their will in the state. He taught the idea of "*wang-tao*", "the king's way", which means the true way in which the king should rule with wisdom, concern, compassion, and justice. Mencius' theory of the original goodness of human nature implied that humans can still have the original goodness and can restore it by their own efforts and cultivation.

Hsun Tzu's thought belonged to Confucian tradition but it did not become the mainstream of Confucian thought as did Mencius' thought. The primary reason may be that Hsun Tzu took a directly opposite view to Mencius' concerning the nature of human as evil because he viewed humans as involved in economy behavior and seeking satisfaction in gain and profit (Kim, 1973). Yet

Hsun Tzu believed that humans can become good through education. Humans become moral only after learning moral principles from laws of society and from teacher. Thus, Hsun Tzu's philosophy stressed that human society needs to be ruled by a strong ruler with a strong authority in order to achieve law and order.

Lao Tzu (fifth century B.C.) urged a natural way of freedom --- a simple and harmonious life, a life in which the profit motive is abandoned, cleverness discarded, selfishness eliminated, and desires reduced (Koller, 1985). The central thought of Taoism, "*tao*", emphasized the need to look beyond the promises and treaties of human beings for a source of peace and contentment. *Tao* is the mother of all things, yet *tao* does nothing. *Tao* transcends time and space and causality and knowledge, and is beyond good and evil, truth and falsehood, life and death. *Tao* is the prime mover and underlies humans, God, and the universe (Moore, 1977). In Taoism, there is a tendency of escapist anarchism and radical individualism emphasizing too much freedom and passive attitude. There is a radical form of anti-culture perspective and anti-social and anti-system attitudes. Taoism stresses meditation and intuition toward sagehood and immortality (Kim, 1973).

The Early Empire, 206 B.C. - A.D. 960. During this period of history, there were two dynasties, Han and T'ang, which were so prosperous that even to this day, Chinese people proudly call themselves the Han people. Han China, contemporaneous with the Roman empire in the West, created a stable aristocratic social

order, expanded geographically and economically, and spread Chinese political influence not only into neighboring Vietnam and Korea, but also across central Asia to the Pamirs. T'ang China also brought China to another peak of organizational stability, economic and military strength, and cultural splendor. The most important developments of Chinese society and philosophy during this period were the urbanism, the system of Ko-Zyu (Imperial Civil Service Examination), and the Buddhism.

Urbanization itself was a prominent aspect of social development from Han into T'ang times. Several large cities were located in the most prosperous areas; each city had a population of more than 200,000 people (Hucker, 1975). These cities were surrounded by thick walls with broad avenues running north-south and east-west. The houses were well built both for accommodation and multiple purposes. Mercantile activities were generally confined to designated market areas scattered through the town. There were also parks and zoos in the cities. A cosmopolitan spirit infected other T'ang cities and left its influence on subsequent urban life in China.

The Imperial Civil Examination was established after the T'ang dynasty. The government selected its officials from those scholars or experts who had passed the examination. Since officials had authority over the people, they controlled most of resources of the society. These officials predominated in upper classes in ancient China and this was the beginning of social classes in China. Traditionally, there were only two distinct

classes in Chinese society, government officials and non-officials. According to the government, there were four classifications of Chinese people; scholars, farmers, artisans, and merchants. The government emphasized that the scholars, the predominant class, would be people who could study, who would do Confucianism research, and who could then pass the Examination to become officials (Huang, Chang, Chao, Hsia, & Wang, 1967). Even though the system was abandoned in Ch'ing dynasty (16th century), the idea still impacts on Chinese society today.

Evidence suggests that Buddhism was known in China by Han Ming-Ti time (A.D. 57-75), and hence became the most important religion of Chinese people. Buddhism appeals to individuals regardless of social and political orders in which they live. Believers must adhere to a strict moral code and in return they receive personal salvation in an eternity divorced from the burdens and sorrows of this life (Hucker, 1975). History, time, nor the world have either positive purpose or positive meaning for the Buddhist (Kim, 1973).

However, Buddhism did not win favor and flourish in China without opposition (Hucker, 1975). There were many aspects of Buddhism doctrine and practice that were at odds with the rational character of Chinese people. Pessimism about this life in this world conflicted with the fundamental optimism and worldly emphasis of both the Confucian and the Taoist philosophical traditions. Besides, the Buddhism concept of salvation is generally a psychological change in a person's state

of mind. It is expressed in terms of the extinction of desire and the awakening of mind and in terms of the realization of Emptiness as Truth and Suchness as the Absolute and Reality (Kim, 1973).

The Later Empire, 960 - 1850. Under the Sung dynasty (960-1279), scholar-officials replaced the semifeudal aristocracy as the dominant class in Chinese society and Chinese culture flourished. Following the Sung dynasty were Yuan,Ming, and Ch'ing. Ch'ing dynasty (1544-1911), the last empire, was under domestic inequities along with new kinds of external pressures from the imperialistic powers of Europe. The style of government became more autocratic, society more mobil and urbanized, and the economy more commercialized. In thought, a revitalized Confucianism swept Buddhism and Taoism into the status of popular religions, only to turn increasingly introspective itself and lose much of its original emphasis on social reform (Hucker, 1975).

With the introduction of Buddhist philosophy, Chinese minds began to speculate more about the metaphysical reality and life beyond this earthly existence, something Confucianism lacked. Thus, new generations of Confucian thinkers adopted certain metaphysical ideas of Buddhism and Taoism, called Neo-Confucianism (Kim, 1973). Neo-Confucianism succeeded in persuading Chinese intellectuals that the world perceptible to the sense is real, not illusionary as Buddhists maintained; and that humankind attains fulfillment by earnest participation in

society, not by standing aloof from it as Taoist are inclined to do. Neo-Confucianism accepted the human cycle from birth to death as normal and good, and they concentrated on society and political reform in this life (Hucker, 1975).

The strongest and nearest fatal challenge to Neo-Confucianism, and also to the whole Confucian tradition, came from Western thought. Through the last few centuries, China changed faster and more radically than in any other period throughout its thousands of years of history. The Christian missionaries and traders brought to China an entirely new thought and new culture (Kim, 1973). Perceiving the influence of Western civilization on the politics and society of China, intellectuals of that time proposed the principle of "to preserve Chinese philosophical ideas and adopt Western scientific knowledge and technology" is to revive China. Western scientific and democratic thoughts were not officially accepted by Chinese scholars until after the May-Fourth-Movement of 1919. Meanwhile, Western literature, philosophy, social science, and art were spreading into China (Huang, et. al., 1967).

Contemporary Leisure in China

Though it is hard to find the term leisure in Chinese literature, a variety of recreation activities are embodied in Chinese culture and people's daily living. Contemporary Chinese leisure activities will be discussed in three broad categories: 1) tourism, 2) sports, and 3) general leisure activities.

China has some of the richest natural scenic resources in the world. The history of travelling in China can be traced back 4,000 years in terms of "kuan-kuang" (sightseeing of the country) in the book *I-Zing*. The popularity of tourism in China developed in the dynasties of Han and T'ang. During that time, many visitors from other countries visited China and Chinese people travelled throughout the country. Among those foreign travelers, the most well-known was the Venetian merchant Marco Polo. His remarkably accurate description of China amused generations of early modern Europeans and made China one of the most admirable lands in that time (Chan, 1980).

The development of domestic tourism in contemporary China is not as modernized as that in Western countries because of the barriers of low income, restricted free time, and limited transportation. Chinese people usually travel during official holidays because of the attitudes of Chinese people toward the time-consuming nature of tourism. The Chinese Lunar New Year, traditionally called the Spring Festival, is especially reserved for travel so that people can visit their friends and relatives. Yet more and more Chinese people are traveling because the paid travel (paid vacation) has become the most popular kind of incentive used by work units in China (Bian, 1990).

The motivation behind travelling of Chinese people is simply for pleasure, using whatever transportation is available. As Bian (1990) commented, "As a matter of fact, travelling has been considered a major source of inspiration ... to the Chinese

people. Even today, the Chinese people travel under transportation and accommodation conditions that most other people would never accept, such as travelling on foot and sleeping in the open in order to save money for additional trips" (p. 28).

Chinese people are proud of their recent development of sports. Most American people will tell you about their participation in variety of sports just for interest or for fun. Yet Chinese people will probably show you the world records of sports that they recently broke. They need the achievements, and the confidence, to show the world their abilities and to prove that they are as good, or even better, as those people in the superpower countries. In Mainland China almost everyone engages in some kind of daily athletic activity ranging from the stretching exercises of traditional Chinese shadow boxing (*T'ai ch'i*) to calisthenics or table tennis.

The function of organized sports within the People's Republic of China extends far beyond recreation (Kaplan, Sobin, & Andors, 1980). Sports provide for the refinement of physical skills and social values (e.g., team spirit, self-sacrifice, cooperation), all of which aid in preparation for participation in Chinese society. The Chinese government also admits that "In sports, as in all other aspects of Chinese culture, it is everywhere evident that politics are in command... The Communist Party oversees sports activities through its Health and Physical

Culture Bureau, a branch of the Propaganda Department" (Kaplan, et. al., 1980, p. 266).

In general, "spectator and participant sports are perhaps the most popular leisure activities in China, with basketball and table-tennis topping the list... In a country of one billion people, space is often at a premium. Table-tennis is a competitive game that takes a very small amount of space and requires a small outlay for equipment" (Wong, 1988, p. 7).

According to Wong (1988), though the average Chinese worker usually works eight hours per day , six days per week, Chinese people still enjoy sufficient time away from work. However, modern household appliances are still expensive and affordable to only a small percentage of the population, and thus arduous household chores consume a substantial portion of that time. Grocery shopping is generally an enormous chore because there is rationing of most food supplies and people stand in line for hours to acquire foods.

The public transportation system in China is so insufficient that whenever a bus approaches a stop, it takes mental alertness and physical strength to get onto the bus. The lack of transportation is a major barrier for Chinese people to utilize their leisure time.

Visiting a park is a very popular form of leisure in China. Most parks are 50 hectares or larger, and the older parks were often developed around locations of historical significance. There are also gardens scattered throughout the cities. "The

gardens are not large, but they are fascinating in their delicate designs, including hills, pavilions, rockers, corridors and ponds" (Bannon, Huimen, & Jianqing, 1990, p. 37). The parks and gardens are usually full of cultural relics and historical objects behind which there is always a legend --- old carvings on the rock that were the handwritings of a king or famed poet.

Shopping in China is less of a leisure activity than in the West. Luxury items are in short supply. "You are apt to find mostly utilitarian merchandise --- pots and pans, tools, hardware, bicycles, household items and a few sports equipments. A jewelry department is nowhere to be found... Electronics are most locally made and cost more than what you pay in Hong Kong" (Wong, 1988, p. 8). Thus, window shopping is popular for people in China.

A popular form of entertainment for the masses is the acrobats variety show. The format of each show is more or less the same: bicycle acts, balancing acts, plate spinning, magic tricks, and a sound effects act. The show usually lasts for two hours, and the spectators thoroughly enjoy it. "...there are many acrobat troupes from each province or city. They tour from town to town, village to village entertaining the general public. For small villages and remote hamlets, a visit by the acrobat troupe is a real treat" (Wong, 1988, p. 8).

Eating is a national pastime for the Chinese people. Unquestionably, food plays an important role in the history of Chinese leisure. Wong (1988) described "One particular

restaurant in Guangzhou is --- Game Restaurant. You can order all types of fancy game dishes --- racoon, deer, snake, monkey, etc." (p. 9). There is a new trend which "...emphasizes the garnishing of the dishes. The chefs take hours to carve carrots and turnips to the shapes of a pagoda, a fisherman fishing by the shore, or to recreate the Guilin mountainscape" (Wong, 1988, p. 9).

Western style ballroom dancing was popular in China in the 1940's and 1950's, but during the Cultural Revolution, dancing was banned. Today, even though dancing is one of the most popular activities for urban Chinese youth, people still hold probated dance parties in discreet places to avoid unwanted attention or possible hooliganism.

Chinese youth enjoy pop music, and perhaps even more so now that the television has taken over as the entertainment center for the family. The introduction of TV sets has opened a window on the outside world. It seems that TV turns a family home into a small theater. It helps people find a convenient way of spending their leisure time. Meanwhile, undeveloped transportation means and insufficient recreation facilities also keep more and more people at home watching TV. However, TV sets are still a luxury (Depei, 1989). TV programs in China are still more educational than entertaining. Actually it is a very important tool for the Communist Party to spread its official thoughts.

Movie going is also very popular. In China, "both local features and foreign films are shown, but China-made movies normally have a political theme" (Wong, 1988, p. 10). Occasionally, non-political movies are produced such as Pecking operas and feature cartoons based on Chinese fairy tales or legends.

Some Chinese people prefer spending their leisure time on more traditional pastimes such as tasting tea, attending Chinese Opera, flying kites, playing Mah-Chok (Chinese cards), gardening, planting bonsai, practicing Chinese calligraphy, telling tales, strolling, and criticizing politics. (Lin, 1980).

Discussion

Hirschman (1982) explored the variation in hedonic consumption pattern among members of religion- and nationality-based ethnic groups. This study suggested significant association between hedonic consumption and ethnicity. He reported that significant ethnic differences were present in projective behavior, imagery, behavior motives, and preferred leisure activities. These differences may result from long-standing subcultural values and are not "necessarily social reactions to recent difficulties of assimilating into the dominant culture" (Hirschman, 1982, p. 233). For example, the pursuit of perfection by Chinese samples was unique to them and linked strongly to many highly stylized forms of physical movement (e.g., the martial art) founded in Chinese culture.

Another study conducted by Rubenstein (1987) found that older individuals derived different meaning from participation in leisure activities in different communities (Grand-Duchy of Luxemburg and Thionville of France). These two studies indicated that different cultures do have different impacts on people's leisure behavior.

The most significant impact of Chinese thought on people's leisure life is based on three specific features of traditional Chinese society: 1) agriculture as the base of living, 2) family as the core of life, and 3) Confucianism as the root of thought.

China bases its foundation on agriculture. Agriculture developed over several thousands years and thus farmers were the majority of the population until recent years. People work hard fighting with nature in order to earn a living from the land. They leave home before dawn and return after the sun sets. They usually are so tired when they return home that they may just talk to their families, play with the children, or do the chores. Even today, people stay home after work and live a passive leisure life doing things like reading, watching TV, playing cards, or relaxing. They are the quiet majority without much money or high social status. There is little energy or money for sophisticated amusement, except the coming of festivals.

In rural areas, Chinese people center their lives around the small agricultural villages because of insufficient transportation and the busy schedules of farming; as a consequence, people developed a special characteristic --- they

love to have visitors and they feel proud if they have made guests or friends comfortable. If they fail to satisfy their guests, they feel that they have "lost face", an unbearable disgrace to oneself and one's family. To Chinese people, "saving face" is often more important than life itself. This is why foreign visitors are often surprised at the sincere hospitality of Chinese people.

The Chinese home does not just mean the combination of husband, wife, and children. It may consist of as many as five generations. Sometimes there will be more than 40 people living in a housing unit. The responsibilities of the family include protecting everyone's existence, restraining the mistakers, or even arranging a member's marriage. Anyone's problem will become everyone's. Yet the family norms also restrict a member's decisions, behavior, and thought. This helps explain why Chinese people sometimes are not able to totally open themselves to try new things or to enjoy happiness if with their family. The family concepts also enhance Chinese people to live a group leisure life which does not encourage individual action. It seems that Chinese people can only gain confidence and approval from the group.

Another important impact on the leisure life of Chinese people is the idea that the most important thought about a family is "carry on the family line" and "favor the male and regard the female lightly". Because Confucianism proposed that carrying on the family line is the responsibility of men and because the

family needs more men to work in the fields, Chinese people traditionally prefer giving birth to boys rather than to girls. The family name is also passed from generation to generation in the male line, as is the family property (Hucker, 1975). This concept deeply influences the female's role in Chinese society, thus restricting the female's participation in leisure activities.

The husband is the final decision maker in a traditional Chinese family. According to a Chinese saying "Help husband and educate children", the wife's role in a family is to support her husband by doing housekeeping or by taking care of the children. Girls are brought up learning many family related skills such as cooking, baby sitting, quilting, and housekeeping. The only purpose (or wish) of growing up a girl is to marry a "good" husband. Girls are neither allowed to leave home as they want nor are they as educated as boys. Under this condition, the leisure activities in which a woman can participate are restricted and most occur within the family. As Hucker (1975) stated:

> It was apparently in faddish imitation of a popular court toe-dancer that Chinese women, in the post-T'ang Five Dynasties era, inflicted on themselves the torture of foot-binding, which literally crippled all upper-class women into the twentieth century; and it may have been some Islamic influence of late T'ang times that caused upper-class Chinese to begin isolating their women in the harem-like privacy that also became part of Chinese tradition, though not rooted in either Han or nomad customs. (p. 176)

Fortunately, this unfair and out-of-date idea is gradually disappearing. Females are more recognized as equal with males.

The contribution of Confucian's thought to China strongly bonded the entire Chinese society together. But the philosophy also has had a negative impact by discouraging people to find their way out of the existing bureaucracy. Chinese students still suffer from preparing for unlimited tests that they must pass in order to be admitted to school or to gain employment. Many parents are still using grades on the report cards as an index to measure their children's academic performance. And this pressure, beginning at a very young age, is one of the most significant reasons that Chinese students do not participate in many leisure activities. They are too busy studying to play.

Taoism's influence on Chinese people's leisure life would be to "do nothing". Since nothing is neither good nor evil, true nor false, why bother doing things? There would then be no meaning for people to exercise, to play, to have fun, or to enjoy life. The escapist strains in Chinese character also contribute to the national endurance (or staying power) that has served China for thousands of years (Hucker, 1975). People used to work so hard that they did not even think about searching for resortation or revitalization. That may be one reason why Chinese people hold such a passive attitude toward leisure.

One distinct difference in daily living between Chinese and Western people is that Chinese people enjoy the "night market". It is marvelous for people to go out and do many things just for

fun after they have worked hard during the day. This phenomenon might have originated from urbanization, 2,000 years ago. Most of the leisure activities in which Chinese people participate occur in the city. People like to be residents of a big city because that means a higher earning capacity and a higher social status.

The folk religion, which combines Taoism, Buddhism, and many other beliefs, has an impact on Chinese people's leisure. People eat, play, socialize, compete, or even trade when they worship their gods. They please the gods while pleasing themselves. People devote a large part of their limited income to religious activities and thus have little money left for other leisure pursuits.

Another factor which influences Chinese people's leisure behavior is the attitude toward nature. The Western thought (in terms of Christianity) proposes that everything in the world is given to humans from God. Thus humans can feel free to explore and to enjoy the natural resources (through leisure activities). On the contrary, Chinese people believe that many gods and ghosts exist in nature. They regard nature as something beyond human beings. The adoration of physical substances (e.g., mountain, river, tree, stone, etc.) makes it difficult for Chinese people to conduct leisure activities in the natural world.

There are several aspects in which Chinese thoughts are different from Western thoughts (Bahm, 1977). While the western culture approves of encouraging desire, Chinese culture just

accepts the desire to be neutral. The pursuit of leisure as pleasure does not need to be encouraged or discouraged. Western thought idealizes progress while Chinese thought idealizes being present-oriented, which may explain the Chinese attitude of feeling so comfortable with the external condition. It seems that Chinese people lack ideals to explore future enjoyment. They tend to remain in their current situation, yet they go with it so well. People in the western world idealize production of goods, while Chinese people idealize the very enjoyment of life itself, which helps to shapes the non-consumptive mind set of Chinese people. In western thought, activities are encouraged while Chinese people accept both activity and passivity. Chinese people believe that one should not be either over-active (interfere with other lives) nor under-active (remain passive when it is time to be active). There is always a time to rise and to go to bed, a time to work and a time to rest. This attitude can be observed in Chinese people's leisure behavior in that they maintain an enjoyable yet easy life.

The integration of agricultural life, family ties, and Confucian's thought shape Chinese minds whenever Chinese people are doing things and they are at the same time involved in relationships with others. The structure of the agricultural society limits Chinese people's daily living in a village-centered area, thus their leisure activities are not sophisticated in terms of variety and follow the simple, never changing farming schedule. People do not have extra money for

leisure and they spend most of their spare time on relaxing or being with friends or family. The very emphasis of family ties makes a Chinese person seldom think of himself or herself as an isolated entity. This concept deeply influences one's leisure behavior in terms of appropriate family manners or ways. Thus, Chinese people's leisure lifestyle appears to be more conservative when compared with that of American people.

Confucianism is concerned with the concept of self-cultivation. Yet humans can not exist alone; all actions must be in a form of interaction between humans. Chinese people seldom participate in leisure activities for their own personal purpose. They usually consider the relationship with others such as family or friends. There are always social norms that Chinese people take into account, no matter what they are doing.

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